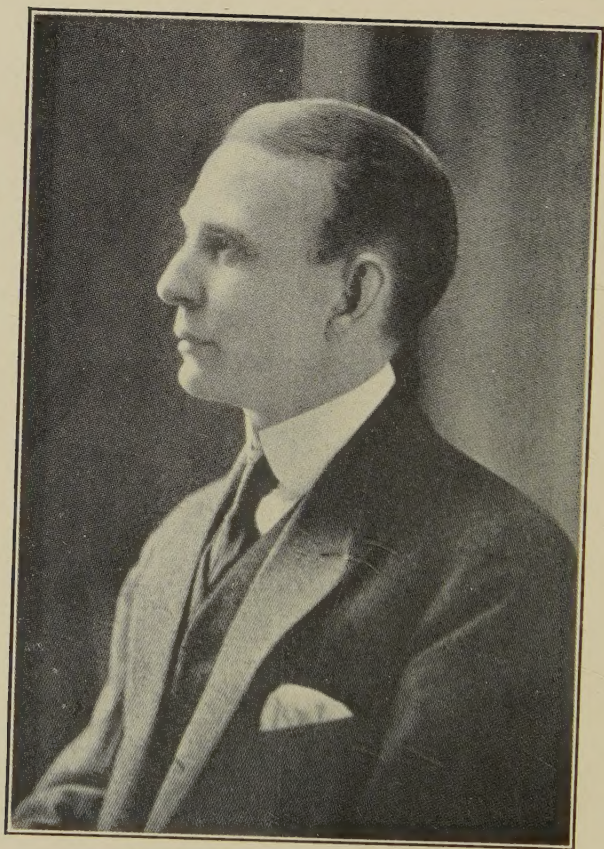


A BETTER COUNTRY

BORDERS

William and Marilyn
from Mother

A Better Country



REV. M. EDWARD BORDERS, A. B., A. M.

A Better Country

(Third Edition)

BY

REV. M. EDWARD BORDERS, A.B., A.M.
PASTOR AND EVANGELIST

Author of

"CORONATION GLORIES"

"THE SUCCESSFUL PASTOR"

"A WRONG CHOICE"

"They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth * * * but now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly."

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

"And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there."

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To my dear mother, who in childhood's trying days, so often read to me of that Better Country; whose prayers and patient sufferings broke my heart and led me to Him who is that Country's climacteric glory, and to her whose earthly twilight even now is under the golden gleam of Heaven's fadeless dawn, this book is devotedly dedicated

BY THE AUTHOR.

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FOREWORD

In the preparation of a treatise on such a superlative subject as the title of this book suggests, the author realizes that the few who have approached it have drawn near with gentle footsteps and bated breath, fearful of being in the category of those who "rush in where angels fear to tread"; and it is not without the same feeling of reverential awe that the writer has compiled this work.

That there cannot be too much said on such a glorious theme, however, need scarcely be stated. The present life with its sighs and its sorrows, its moans and its maladies, its troubles and its tears, its griefs and its graves, groaning with the sufferings of the poor, resounding with the shrieks of the dying, and reeking with the stupendous and incalculable degradation and debauchery of sin, is to me a constant reminder that this world is not an Eden, and that "I am but a stranger here; Heaven is my home." Who has not longed for that blessed haven? It has been the theme of the most holy and seraphic of mankind in all ages, as they voiced their sentiments in song, sermon, testimony, and prayer. The human heart instinctively longs for that blissful abode, and the best and most luminous of the militant church dwell often upon its supernal glories and grandeurs. Oh, that we all may meditate on its precious scenes, obtain a foretaste here below, and enjoy its elysian realities forever!

INTRODUCTION

This world at its best is a mixed world—righteousness and sin—and sin largely predominates.

Heaven and hell are unmixed worlds.

In hell evil prevails unrestrained by the laws of righteousness.

In Heaven righteousness prevails untrammelled by evil.

Unmixed righteousness produces undisturbed happiness,—the natural longing of every human soul.

This heart-thirst is an indisputable evidence of the immortality of the human soul and its ultimate location in Heaven.

Having had my attention called to this book entitled "A Better Country," by Rev. M. E. Borders, it gives me great pleasure to call the attention of the reading public to this opportune and splendidly written book.

It is needed and will bear fruit.

I regard it as a lucid, suggestive, strong, helpful and timely book.

It is well thought out and clearly expressed in terse, accurate and conspicuous English.

It has both religious and literary merit.

The true saints of God in the midst of the oppositions and conflicts incident to a life devoted

to God need to have their attention called from the conflicts below to a Better Country above.

It gives me great pleasure to commend this excellent book to the minds and hearts of men interested in that Better Country,—especially to the saints of God.

It will awaken the sinner, stimulate the backslider to return to God, and encourage the sanctified to press on courageously and victoriously to that Better Country.

J. W. HUGHES, PH. B.

President of Kingswood College.

"I will sing you a song of that beautiful land,
The far-away home of the soul,
Where no storms ever beat on the glittering strand,
While the years of eternity roll.

O, that home of the soul, in my visions and dreams,
Its bright jasper walls I can see,
Till I fancy but thinly the veil intervenes,
Between the fair city and me.

There the great tree of life in its beauty doth
grow,
And the river of life floweth by,
For no death ever enters that city you know,
And nothing that maketh a lie.

That unchangeable home is for you and for me,
Where Jesus of Nazareth stands;
The King of all kingdoms forever is He,
And He holdeth our crowns in His hands.

O, how sweet it will be in that beautiful land,
So free from all sorrow and pain!
With songs on our lips and with harps in our hands,
To meet one another again."

Heaven, a Better Country

"Time is winging us away
To our eternal home."

With profound and reverential humility I undertake this great subject. I only wish that it were in my power to describe the transcendent glory of this eternal home of the redeemed. Such a description, however, has never been conveyed to the human mind, and therefore can never be transmitted to human tongue. After all we have read, studied, heard, and felt, what a feeble idea we have of the glory and grandeur awaiting us when done with this world. The richest, ripest, rarest earthly language is incapable of giving us the slightest conception of its infinite and endless joys. John's inspired vision caught a faint glimpse of this home, but few of us can understand this mystical apocalyptic description. We stand amazed, confused,

and bewildered by a multiplicity of symbols and images which, to most minds, I fear, obscures rather than illuminates this Celestial City.

In considering this subject, I call your attention to five simple divisions.

- I Two Certainties About Heaven
- II Some Things in This World That Will
 Not Be in Heaven
- III Some Things That Heaven Will Be
- IV Some of the Attractions of Heaven
- V The Way to Heaven

I. Two Certainties About Heaven

(1) *Heaven is a State.* The writer of the Hebrews said that we were to receive a kingdom. Christ said, "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you." The inspired apostle, Paul, said, "The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." So, then, being right with God is to be in a heavenly state or condition.

In one of my revival meetings some years ago, an actress was smitten with conviction. She became so sick of sin that she literally staggered under its awful guilt. At the altar of prayer, with sobs and tears, she prayed for pardon. Instantly heavenly light broke in on her darkened soul, she sprang to her feet, and with shining, upturned face, she lifted her rich, cultured voice in song.

“Once Heaven seemed a far-off place,
Till Jesus showed His smiling face:
Now it’s begun within my soul,
’Twill last while endless ages roll.

“O hallelujah, yes ’tis Heaven,
’Tis Heav’n to know my sins forgiv’n;
On land or sea, what matters where,
Where Jesus is, ’tis Heaven there.”

The whole audience seemed to be moved by a glorious, heavenly atmosphere. It seemed that “angels were hovering ’round.”

In another meeting, a brilliant and

beautiful young lady came to the altar. She had once been a Christian, but had been wofully backslidden for years. The once glowing coals of hope were almost entirely extinguished. What sad, despairing features! What a hard, cynical face! What a lightless, hopeless countenance! I asked her to pray. She said, "I cannot." I urged her. She said, "It is useless; there is no hope; God will not hear me." I asked her to close her eyes and say, "O Jesus, O Jesus!" She began breathing His blessed name in prayer. Soon the tears began to flow; the features relaxed, and suddenly the light from another world was in her countenance. As the audience looked on her shining face, all felt that they were in the ante-chamber of Heaven.

In joy or sadness, sorrow or pain, storm or calm, health or sickness, adversity or prosperity, with friends or friendless, in life or death, if we have Jesus, we have Heaven begun and a rich foretaste of the

full and indescribable inheritance awaiting us by and by. Fourteen years ago it seemed that God left His refulgent throne to walk and talk with me. He brought me this heavenly experience, and since then, I have been going about this old world humming and harping heavenly praises.

(2) *Heaven is a Place.* The Bible speaks of it as "A paradise restored, a city, a city of God, a better country (literally, a fatherland), a temple, a garner, a kingdom, an everlasting kingdom, a fadeless and incorruptible inheritance, a dwelling place, God's throne and Father's house of many mansions." God is a person. The Bible speaks of Him looking down from His habitation in Heaven; again it speaks of "the place of His habitation."

While there is a sense in which Heaven is everywhere, because God is everywhere, yet Heaven is somewhere in particular. The glorified body of Moses, of Enoch, of

Elijah, and of our blessed Lord are somewhere. My sister is somewhere. One dark, dreary day they took her body and placed it to rest under the sad, sighing locust trees of her native state, but she is not there. She is in some place, and that place, blessed be God, is Heaven!

Jesus told His sorrowing disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also." We would draw the following certainties from this part of Christ's farewell message:

- (1) That He is going away.
- (2) To prepare a Home; a place.
- (3) He is coming again.
- (4) He will receive them in this place He is preparing.

Some would have us believe that God is going to fix this world and make it the final home of His people. Well, they may

stay here if they so desire, but some day
I am going away.

“My Father’s house is built on high;
Far, far above the starry sky;
When from this earthly prison free,
That heav’nly mansion mine shall be.”

Yes; I am going up when through with
this earthly pilgrimage,—not to a world
cursed and ruined by sin and then fixed by
a kind, provident, beneficent God; but to a
prepared world that has never known the
blight of sin; to a world whose streets are
gold and whose walls are jasper, whose
inhabitants are holy angels and the re-
deemed and blood-washed of all ages. I
expect to slip out of this old world and
sweep through the pearly gates under the
glittering rainbow glories of the heavenly
city. I shall see its crystal seas, mirror-
ing perfectly the image of its glorious
King, roam its gloriously hued and ex-
quisitely perfumed flower fields, eat the
luscious fruit of the tree of life, one leaf
of which is enough to “heal a nation.” I

shall strike a harp of gold with that company who are now singing melodious sonnets with flaming tongues above.

The wonders of creation give us a hint of the infinite greatness and grandeur of Heaven. In our planetary system, there are eight large worlds, and of this number, this world is among the smallest. Uranus is fifty times larger than the earth; Neptune, sixty; Saturn, one thousand; while Jupiter is twelve hundred times larger, and if all these worlds were rolled into one great globe, old Father Sun around which they all revolve would still be five hundred times larger. In other words, the sun is 1,400,000 times larger than this little, diminutive globe upon which we live. Besides this, the mighty photographic telescopes have revealed 500,000,000 of other stars or suns, some of them one thousand times larger and brighter than the sun. Light, which travels at the rate of one hundred and eighty-five thousand miles per second,

would flash around this small world of ours seven times in one second. It would travel from the sun to this earth, a distance of 91,000,000 miles in eight minutes, and yet it would take it ten thousand years to leap across the "Milky Way." If a star should suddenly begin to shine on the outermost rim of the "Milky Way" with sufficient brilliancy to reach the farthestmost star of the other rim, it would take its light, traveling at the rate of one hundred and eighty-five thousand miles per second, ten thousand years to reach that star. Oh, the mysterious and impenetrable wonders of creation! Looking beyond the rim of all that has been discovered, they tell us "there is a luminous haze suggestive of other glories of creation, stretching farther on in the dim distance of space, which mortal man may never hope to explore. All of these millions of varied, whirling, flaming worlds flung out into space by the omnipotent hand of an infinite Creator, may be but a drop in the bucket

compared with the infinite number of created glories beyond the searching sweep of the mighty telescopes; and yet our God calls them all by name and upholds them by the word of His power.

Then, again, the beauties of creation give us a hint of the indescribable glories of Heaven. This world of ours is indeed beautiful, but it is a well-known astronomical fact that it is not to be compared with the marvellous and unapproachable beauty of other worlds. One astronomer speaks of this world of ours, with its golden morning dawns, radiant sunsets, gorgeously hued evening sky, vernal beauty of spring, golden glow of summer, and the fading bloom of autumn, as being mean, dim and dusky as compared with the indescribable glory of other worlds. Saturn, besides being one thousand times larger than our earth, has eight large moons shining in its sky, and is encircled with zones of light of immense size and of various and wondrous colors. Three

mighty belts of rainbow lustre encircle this glorious world. One astronomer said, "such a world as Saturn seems to be a very Paradise where the redeemed of the Lord might walk, or angels soar and sing." It is a place of such wonderful beauty that he conjectured it "as being possibly populated with a race akin to angels." Besides the gorgeously dressed and princely plumed Saturn, we have in our solar system the beautiful, silvered Venus and the rich, red Mars.

Of the millions of stars outside of our planetary system, every color and hue, is represented. The telescope reveals red, green, purple, gold, white, blue, violet, and orange. Then there are the binaries (or double worlds) which represented two different colors beautifully blended. There is the combination of yellow and purple; pea green and blue; sea green and orange; blue and orange; white and light purple; emerald green and orange; and yellow and sapphire blue.

The beautiful star, Arcturus, which spoke to Job of his mighty Redeemer, is of a flaming color, one thousand times brighter than our sun. In the glorious constellation Orion, of which the book of Job speaks, there are three double stars, with the colors, white and blue; yellow and blue; and white and purple. Is it any wonder that a Christian astronomer said of these astonishing and bewildering mysteries "that if mortal man on this dim speck of earth can catch even a glimmer of such heavenly splendors, what glories may not the future life unfold?" Another says that "all these created wonders may be but the dim corner of that glorious Home, the suburbs of the glorious City, the ante-room of the King's Palace, the shimmer of Heaven's glittering gates, or the dust from Heaven's golden streets."

Then there may be a suggestion in the plan of creation. A widely accepted plan of creation is that all of these millions of stars or suns are great centres, around

which planets revolve. Then there is a great, great central sun of incalculable size, around which all of these smaller suns with their planetary systems are revolving. One astronomer has gone so far as to conjecture "that this great, great central sun is five hundred times larger than all of these millions of other suns combined." They have estimated that it would take these suns, travelling at the rate of one hundred thousand miles per hour, twenty-five hundred thousand years to make one circuit around this great, great centre. One Christian astronomer has said that "this great, great centre is Heaven."

Yet some would have us think that this little dim speck of earth, comparatively speaking, in the illimitable realm of creation, is to be the "Eternal Home of the saints." This to me is painfully unreasonable. Ah, this is too small, too small for the mighty cravings and longings of an immortal spirit, which is in the great

Creator's estimation infinitely greater than all other created wonders. Finally, let me say on this point, we do not know as to the truth of these conjectures, but this one thing we do know, that out yonder somewhere in God's great, measureless universe, He has a home for His own. I believe this home to be the climacteric stroke of His creative genius, and that Heaven will be the greatest, grandest world in the ability of an Almighty God to create. I believe that when God shall have completed Heaven there will not be one thing that can be added to or taken from it. The glory of the countless, starry hosts bewilder the mind and stagger the imagination, but Heaven will surpass and transcend their combined beauties.

Heaven will be the great metropolis of God's people, resplendent with His blazing, burnished throne; forever guarded by the presence of the worshipful Trinity, abundantly spacious for millions of ador-

ing angels and millions of glad, happy beings from perhaps all of these millions of unfallen worlds; and, blessed be God, millions of adoring, blood-washed saints from the battle field of this old world, who in all probability will be the wonder of the inhabitants of this blessed Home, as the only ones who have known the curse and blight of sin and the power of redeeming grace!

Yes, Heaven is somewhere! God is not so impoverished as to be forced to herd and crowd His people together on this small globe! Just what relationship this redeemed world will sustain toward the heavenly universe, we do not know. It may be a sort of a Bunker Hill monument; marking the place where Jesus Christ, (Heaven's Champion,) met sin, death, and hell; where the great battle of human redemption was fought; and where the victory was won that redeemed a guilty race.

"I hear thee speak of a better land :
Thou call'st its children a happy band.
Mother, oh ! where is that radiant shore ?
Shall we not seek it, and weep no more ?
Is it where the flower of the orange blows,
And the fireflies dance through the myrtle
boughs ?"

"Not there, not there, my child !"

"Is it where the feathery palm-trees rise,
And the date grows ripe under sunny skies ?
Or midst the green islands of glittering seas,
Where fragrant forests perfume the breeze,
And strange, bright birds on their starry wings
Bear the rich hues of all glorious things ?"

"Not there, not there, my child !"

"Is it far away in some region old,
Where the rivers wander o'er sands of gold,
Where the burning rays of the ruby shine,
And the diamond lights up the secret mine,
And the pearl gleams forth from the coral
strand ?—

Is it there, sweet mother !—the better land ?"

"Not there, not there, my child !"

"Eye hath not seen it, my gentle boy ;
Ear hath not heard its deep sounds of joy ;
Dreams cannot picture a world so fair ;
Sorrow and death may not enter there :
Time doth not breathe on its deathless bloom ;
Beyond the clouds, beyond the tomb,—

It is there, it is there, my child !"

II. Some Things in This World That Will Not Be in Heaven

(1) *No Sin.* The Word says “and there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth.” Sin is at the bottom of all trouble in this world. The jails, work-houses, insane asylums, and reformatories are monuments marking its victories. Every bitter tear, sigh, and groan has been caused by its ravage and ruin. It has blasted the world’s hopes, degraded its desires, fired its passions, polluted its influence, stained its character, shattered its intellect, outraged its morality, seared its conscience, perverted and cursed its life, and seeks to damn eternally every soul. It has filled the world with disease and death. It is itself the worst disease,—yea, worse than all malignant diseases combined! Smallpox, yellow fever, black diphtheria, leprosy, and all the other dreadful scourges are nothing compared with this. The distempers of

this world can only affect body and mind for time, but this malignant plague ruins body and soul forever. Go where you will and you will find it. It is rampant everywhere,—in every life, family, town, city, state, and country, but, thank God, there are two places that sin cannot be found,—in a pure heart, and in a pure Heaven.

(2) *No Sorrow.* The Word says “and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things have passed away.” The world is filled with sighs, groans, tears, and heartaches.

On one occasion we went out to make some pastoral calls. Going into a home we found an elderly lady who was left alone in the world. She was heart broken over the fact her children had deserted her and forgotten her. In another, we found a widow with four children, with hardly a hod full of coal and scarcely a

bite of bread. She was fighting hard the wolf of adversity. In another, we found the mother's eyes red and swollen with weeping over a son who had forgotten her prayers and gone off into a life of prodigality. In still another home, was sorrow and disgrace over the fact that a daughter had lost her virtue and womanhood. In another, a mother had just lost a beautiful little boy from black diphtheria. She looked as though the sun had set to rise no more forever. A very beautiful, palatial home on the hill was surrounded with well kept lawns, shrubbery, and variegated perfumatory flowers. The floors of this home were covered with heavy carpets, beautiful pictures were on the wall, expensive draperies overhung the windows, but the sound of laughter was scarcely ever heard. The only music was a little bird singing at intervals in its little prison. The hearts and hopes of this family had been crushed by the presence of a drunken father and son.

I went back to the parsonage after this day's work, and threw myself on the couch, weary, sick, and tired, and said, "God only knows the bitter anguish of this world!" Surely sorrow is written over every life. We should be very kind and patient with this world. How careful should we be in our criticisms of those about us, for we may know but little the storms of sorrow that sweep the coast of their souls! Thank God, in Heaven there will be no sorrow! I used to hear my mother sing

"In Heaven above where all is love,
There'll be no sorrow there."

There sorrow will never cloud the brow, and bitter tears will never blind our eyes or stain our cheeks. In that blessed world, there will be "no good absent and no evil present."

(3) *No Separation.* This is a world of separation. We have our mothers and fathers for a little while. We are blessed

with their example and influence, and we feel that we could not live without them, but soon they pass on. We grow up with our brothers and sisters, and the thought of separation brings a feeling of sadness, but circumstances in life divide the family and it is soon scattered over several states or countries. We press our children to our hearts as if we could keep them, but soon Death comes uninvited, and they are torn away.

“One by one their chairs are emptied,
One by one they went away.”

So one by one they are slipping away from us. How we review the dear, sweet familiar faces of the bygone. There are dear father and dear mother, whose heads are crowned with the silver diadem of old age, their brows wrinkled with ceaseless care, and their cheeks furrowed with some life-long sorrow. How we long for one word from their dear lips! How we sigh when we feel that never again will their

gentle hands be laid on our brows! How memory reverts and brings again to us the dear brother or sister, but now their eyes are closed and their lips silent! God knows, we would not call them back, but how we do miss them!

Then some of us have drawn the death cloth over the dear young white faces of our lovely children. The great Master plucked them from the garden of our hearts while they were yet fresh with the dews of morning and transplanted them into that blessed, blooming Paradise above. The little crib, vacant chair, half-worn shoes, and a dozen little toys remind us of the one who brought so much sunshine into our lives. But then that day of sickness; the doctor and nurse looked anxious. Finally the worst came. It nearly broke our hearts, and we have never fully recovered from it.

“When we see a precious blossom,
That we tended with such care,
Rudely taken from our bosom,
How our aching hearts despair!

Round its little grave we linger,
Till the setting sun is low,
Feeling all our hopes have perished
With the flow'r we cherished so."

As life rolls on, and we rapidly approach the grave, what a sense of loneliness creeps over us! We have been led to exclaim many times, "Thank God, there will be no separation in Heaven!"

When the late Dr. DeWitt stood at the grave of his wife, and while the body was being lowered to its resting place, the venerable man of God leaned over the open space and cried out: "Farewell, my honored, faithful, beloved wife. The bond that bound us here is severed. Thou art in Glory, I am still on earth. Farewell, farewell; but dear, precious wife, we will soon meet again."

"We shall part but not forever
At the lone and silent grave;
Blessed be the Lord that taketh,
Blessed be the Lord that gave.
In the bright Eternal City,
Death can never never come;
In His own good time He'll gather
From our rest to home, sweet home."

III. Some Things That Heaven Will Be

(1) *A Land of Song.* John said, "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, 'Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!'"

1. *Note its singers.* All the sweet singers of Israel, perhaps David leading the list, and then Cowper, Charles Wesley, Toplady, the blind singer, Fanny Crosby, and all the rest of the redeemed singers of earth will be there to swell the chorus.

2. *The number of its singers.* John said that the number of this chorus was so great that the mighty volume of song was like the sounding of many waters, and as the lumbering roll of thunder. Some years ago the State of Kentucky had a great "Home Coming." Her ex-sons and daughters from all over the land were in-

vited to visit again the old Blue-grass State, the home of their nativity. An important part of the program was the unveiling of the statue of Stephen Foster, the writer of the world-famed piece, "My Old Kentucky Home." Twenty-five thousand people gathered in the great armory in Louisville to witness this event. When the hour arrived, two of the beautiful belles of Kentucky, clad in white, walked out on a great platform, and began slowly to draw back a silken coverlet. Just at that time, a brass band of one hundred and fifty or more pieces started up "My Old Kentucky Home," and twenty-five thousand people suddenly began to sing the old song, loved so dearly by all Kentuckians. No one can imagine the mighty volume of music from this tremendous choir of twenty-five thousand singers. It seemed literally to lift me off my feet. The effect was like the shock of an electric battery. There was scarcely a dry eye in all that great company.

All the time I was thinking of that great "Home Coming" beyond the stars, when the sons and daughters of Jehovah from the North and South and from the East and West shall come marching in, not only coming to the soul's native Home, but coming to witness the great Coronation of the King of Kings. There the glory and magnificence of the God-head will be unveiled. There all the wondrous mysteries of redemptive scheme will begin to burst on our clarified vision. Twenty-five thousand seems a large chorus, but what is that compared with the number who will then sing "Redemption's Story"? John said that the company of singers was so large that no man could number them. Man has numbered the inhabitants of this world. The present population is 1,600,000,000, and that great chorus whose songs of praise shall roll through the vaulted Heavens, will greatly exceed this vast number.

3. *Note the song that they sing.* The Bible says that, "It is a new song." The angels sang about His glory, wisdom, honor, power, might, and blessing, but this mighty chorus sings, "But unto Him who has loved us and redeemed us from sin in His own blood and made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and forever." Abel was the first one that ever sang this new song. He was the first martyr who was ever slain on the altar of jealousy and was saved by faith in the prospective Christ. He was the first soul the angels ever came after, the first one who ever told the redemptive story to the angels, and the first man to sing this song, "Saved by grace." Since that time what a vast multitude have joined this company of "new-song" singers!

4. *Note the theme of their song.* Is it morality, good works, or evolution? No, it says "They cried with a loud voice;

‘SALVATION, SALVATION unto our God and the Lamb’.” Are they singing about his wonderful example, His matchless ministry of mercy, His unparalleled system of philosophy, or His astonishing miracles? No, they are all orthodox; they are singing about the blood. So, then, the theme of the church militant and the eternal song of the church triumphant is “Salvation through the precious merits of the Redeemer’s blood.”

(2) *It is a Land of Purity.* John sees them march around the refulgent throne of God. What a spectacular company! They have come from all nations, kindred, peoples, and tongues; they are clothed with the snow-white robes of spotless purity, and have palms of victory in their hands. When the angels behold this long looked for event, this, the crowning glory of earth and Heaven, the Word says that they fall down on their faces, and just simply worship God, saying, “Amen,

Amen.” John, looking on, asked the question, “Who are these?” One high in authority in the heavenly universe said, “These are they who have come up out of much tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” So, then, Heaven is a land of purity.

(3) *The Place of Happy Reunions.* I believe that there will be three great family reunions in Heaven.

1. Our own flesh and blood. Every one of us have loved ones in Heaven. There is not a family whose circle is unbroken. Death has entered every one of our homes and taken a father, mother, brother, sister, son, or daughter. We all know something of that vacant chair or crib. They told us “good-by” in this world, and the last word was “meet me in Heaven.” One of the great attractions of that place will be the joy of seeing and knowing our dear loved ones. Some

years ago I visited my old home in the State of Kentucky. After having had a pleasant time for a number of weeks, the time came for me to bid farewell to my relatives and take the train for a distance of thirteen hundred miles, nearly half way across the continent. My brothers and sisters were all weeping. My good old mother came in and said to us children, "Let us not weep, let us dry our tears." She said to me, "Go on in God's name, preach the Gospel." Let us all live for God, and by and by we shall strike hands on the golden shore, and be united to part no more.

2. Those with whom we have lived, loved, and labored in our generation. I know them all over the country, and I expect to know them all in Heaven. Many with whom we have preached, prayed, wept, cried, and shouted; we have shared each other's joys and sorrows; we have stood shoulder to shoulder in this great

conflict against sin and Satan; by-and-by when the smoke-covered battle-field shall be exchanged for the jubilant and rapturous "Home Coming," this blessed family will be reunited in Heaven.

3. The great family of God of all ages who have lived any time in the world's history. The Bible speaks of them as "the whole family." We shall meet those who loved God and who lived and toiled for Him before history had inscribed her imperishable records and ere tradition's thick, dark speech was spoken. We shall rejoice with those who lived in the misty twilight of time; with those who lived in the dewy morning of the world; and, on down across the centuries the tried and true of all lands and climes, and of all ages and periods. They will all be there,—the great family of God, and what a great family this will be! What distinguished brothers and sisters we have! In God's great family record book, their

names are all written. We have one brother in our family who is the father of many nations,—Brother Abraham. We have another who was the greatest lawyer, law-giver and legislator the world ever saw. He lifted his sinewy, swarthy hand at the Red Sea, and that mighty body of water, twelve miles wide and eighty-five feet deep, rolled back on either side, so that Israel's fleeing host marched through dry shod. He smote the rock, and its sparkling water gushed forth to slake the thirsty millions. He was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt as well as the wisdom of God,—Brother Moses. We have another one who could arrest the sun in its course that he might have more time in which to fight God's battle,—Brother Joshua.

We have still another who was so learned that he became the head prince of a great kingdom, and was so pious that his enemies put him in a lion's den, but God locked their jaws and gave him such

a mighty deliverance that he revolutionized the whole kingdom,—Brother Daniel. Three more would not bow their knee to gold, were bound and fettered and cast into a fiery furnace, but the fourth, like the Son of God, went with them in the fire, and neutralized its flames, delivering them so marvellously that not a hair was singed or the smell of smoke left on their garments,—the three Hebrew brothers. Another, who was greater than a thousand Herculeases, carried off the gate of a great city on his shoulders; seized the jawbone of an ass, and slew a thousand of the Lord's enemies, stood between the pillars of a great temple and brought it with a mighty crash to the ground,—Brother Samson. Another, who flung worlds from His fingers, was born in Bethlehem of Judea; whose voice winds obeyed; at whose command the dead leaped to life. He was crucified on a cross, incarcerated in the City of Death, burst its bars, carried off its gates, ascended on high, and became

our Friend at the right hand of God forever,—Our Elder Brother, JESUS CHRIST. In this great family book, if you are saved by grace, you will find your name on this distinguished record. This great family will all meet in Heaven.

IV. Some of the Attractions of Heaven

(1) *The Angelic Host.* With wonder and amazement we shall behold them,—column after column, and rank after rank of these shining servants of God. We shall then understand the wondrous mystery of their creation, their nature and work. In this great and glorious throng, there will be the cherubim and seraphim, angels and archangels, whose countenances are radiant with celestial glory. They rejoiced before the morning stars sang together, before the countless constellations were reared in space; with wonder and amazement they beheld the marvellous creative ingenuity of God in the creation of these myriads of worlds. They have been around for a long while, and there will be many things of interest with which they are thoroughly familiar. It seems that there are some of this great number who will be especially interesting.

What will it be to see those who stood at Abraham's tent? Those visiting Lot, and telling him to flee from the wrath-doomed city? The angel that swept over Egypt that dark night and left slain the first-born in every home upon whose doorpost there was no blood? The angel that fought for Israel and slew one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrians in one night? The great company in their chariots of fire with drawn, flaming swords covering the Assyrian hills, guarding and protecting the servant of God,—Elisha?

Will it not be interesting to acquaint ourselves with the twelve legions (seventy-two thousand) who were Christ's body guard? With those who sung Him from Glory and made the hills and plains reverberate with their glad hallelujahs as they sang the redemption song to the group of trembling shepherds on the Judean hills; who ministered to Him in the hour of trial and temptation among the wild beasts of the wilderness; who sus-

tained Him in the dark sad hour of soul anguish in the lonely solitude of Gethsemane's garden, and who would have with one word from their Commander annihilated His enemies? It will, indeed, be interesting to see the white-clad angels who rolled the Roman-sealed stone away, and the great company with silver-tipped wings that surrounded Him on the victorious summit of Mount Olivet and who with their glad hosannas shouted Him back through the pearly portals to His heavenly home.

God tells us in His Word that the angels are going to be the reapers in the Judgment Day. He says again, "They are ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be the heirs of salvation." They have witnessed the struggles, conflicts, and victories of this old battlefield for centuries. Oh, what a distinguished and interesting company this will be! Will they not be one of the awe-

inspiring attractions of our heavenly home?

(2) *The Old Testament Saints.* The great number of patriarchs and prophets who stood on tiptoe and peered down through the ages and rejoiced to see the glorious day of Christ. They were saved by faith in the Christ that was to come. See them enter with a mighty shout of triumph! Here they come—the sacramental host! What swelling, shining columns! There is Moses, who, when on earth, looked into the face of God, and whose face shone with so much celestial glory that people dare not look at him, but now he shines with greater lustre than the morning star! There is Enoch, who walked with God without a break for three hundred years. There is Elijah, who had such power with God and power with the people, and who went to Heaven in a chariot of fire. There is Daniel, who laughed at roaring lions, and went true

to his God. There are the three Hebrew children, who defied the fiery furnace, and kept a perpendicular character. There is Job (the patient) who elbowed his way through sorrows and afflictions, and who looked into the far distant future and shouted as he saw his Redeemer. There is Isaiah (the evangelistic prophet) who was sawed asunder. There is John the Baptist, the last prophet, the leather-girdled, bronze-browed, bare-headed, swift-footed forerunner of Jesus Christ, whose head was fed to hungry dogs because he was true to truth and true to God. Hear the tramp, tramp, tramp, of this army whose white, unfurled banners are emblazoned with eternal victory; who have fought the fight, won the prize and are Home at last!

(3) *The New Testament Saints.* Mary, the mother of Jesus, honored above all the women of the earth. There we shall behold the wonderful Matthew, Mark, and

Luke; the impetuous and thundering Peter! What a revival flame he was! When very old, he was led to the cross and at his own request was crucified with his head downward. There is guileless Nathanael from the town of Cana, careful and conservative James, and the sublime and lovable John. Here comes the first New Testament martyr, the mighty Pentecostal preacher, Stephen. He died on the cold ground under a coverlet of stones from the hands of an angry mob, his face shining with angelic radiance as he caught a glimpse of his glorious Lord awaiting him at Heaven's glittering gateway. Here comes Brother Paul, the Lord's signal standard-bearer. What a ceaseless toiler he has been! He has thrilled thousands with his eloquence and logic, and before him kings and thrones have trembled. He had a bent form and a squeaky voice, but now he stands erect and his voice is like the peal of thunder. On his glorified body are marks of suffering and sacrifice. In

that illustrious and exalted company, he resembles his Master perhaps the most of all. One bright morning, this battle-scarred veteran of the cross was led by a group of soldiers three miles from the ancient city of Rome. His neck was laid across a block, and a strong soldier unsheathed his sword and with one merciless stroke decapitated his great head; but now God crowns him with a glory that an archangel would covet. Will it not add to the glory of that blessed world to meet all these and many others whose names are in the Book of Life, who lived in the times of Christ's earthly ministry, many of whom were healed from a dreadful disease, or raised from the dead by His power; who fought the fight, kept the faith, and now join in the celebration of this universal victory?

(4) *The Great Army of Martyrs.* This special company have sealed their faith with their own blood. This army, who

have defied fire and flood, wicked men and malignant devils. They who have heard the snarl and growl of the lion and leopard, who prayed and rejoiced when the blackened flesh was literally falling from their bones.

It is said that Lamberton, the great English teacher, and one of the martyrs of the 16th century, when brought from prison into the inner chamber, where he was told the hour of his death was at hand, cheerfully saluted all present, and sat down and ate a hearty breakfast, showing neither fear nor sadness. Immediately after his meal he was led to the place of execution, where a great curiosity-seeking crowd had gathered, expecting to see him recant and beg for mercy. The manner of his death was simply horrible. First, his legs were burnt off, leaving nothing but two charred stumps; standing up on these blackened stumps, and lifting his arms as far as the chains would allow him, his voice rang out in exultant victory

as he shouted, "Nothing but Jesus; nothing but Jesus." In order to terminate this praise meeting in the furnace of fire, his enemies sprang on him and stabbed him to death with their swords. The last words that fell from his dying lips were, "Nothing but Jesus."

John Huss, the great scholar and Bohemian reformer, when brought to the place of execution, and when the blue flames were hissing and wrapping about his body, while he suffered the awfulness of being roasted to death, clapped his hands three times and saluted his friend and co-laborer in the crowd, and cried, "George! George! George! Tell to the world that anywhere with Jesus it is all right!"

I saw the martyr at the stake,
The flames could not his courage shake,
Nor death his soul appall;
I asked him whence his strength was giv'n—
He looked triumphantly to Heav'n,
And answered "Christ is all."

In the third century we read of a young girl who, while witnessing the execution of a friend, rushed in before the executors and testified to the saving power of Jesus, and defied them and their cruel tortures. They ordered her to be whipped, thinking that this would cool her ardor. She rejoiced while the lash lacerated her tender body. The persecutors, enraged, determined to conquer her. She was stretched upon a table and her sides were torn with hooks and flaming torches were stuck in the holes. Her agony was indescribable, but she prayed, "Lord Jesus, hear my prayer and give me grace, perfect Thy work in me, and bid me be numbered among the elect in that great rest of life eternal." By and by it seemed that the shekinah cloud of God's ineffable glory rested upon her, and suddenly her exultant soul leaped from her poor, suffering body and sped to the very bosom of God. Her triumph was so glorious that many others were converted to the faith, and this so

enraged the persecutors that they ordered that her body should hang upon the rack to be devoured by the birds.

A mother had her seven sons led out to be martyred. When the flames were devouring their writhing bodies and licking up their very life's blood, she went from one to another, exhorting them to be true to God.

And this great army of victorious martyrs,—what a glory they will add to the great Home of the saints! Here they come. Two hundred thousand of them, slain in the 13th century by Pope Julian. Here comes another company of one hundred thousand Huguenots, massacred in three months by the bloody soldiers of France, and still another company from the 13th century, the Waldenses, one million strong. Another of nine hundred thousand who were murdered in thirty years by the Jesuits. Still another of thirty-six thousand, who were hung by the Duke of Alva, and one hundred and

fifty thousand from Spain, Portugal, and Italy, who died for Jesus' sake in the "Inquisition," and one hundred and fifty thousand from the Irish massacre in the 13th century, besides the great multitudes of whom the world has never known, presenting an army of nearly seventy-five million in number, nearly as large as the entire population of the United States.

They were banished, burned, starved, buried alive, smothered, drowned, rent limb from limb by instruments of cruelty, torn into shreds by wild beasts, and thrown into dungeons with hissing, poisonous, venomous reptiles; but now, blessed be God, it is all over forever, and they come swinging through the wide-open gates of the Holy City, their heavenly Home. Oh, what shouting and clapping as they march through! No more stakes, no more dark, dreary dungeons; no more to hear the snarl and growl of wild beasts, the hissing sting of poisonous serpents; no more unjust trials and cruel mockings

and scourgings; but now the long-panted-after goal is past, and they are crowned with eternal life and immortal glory.

(5) *Our Own Loved Ones.* The poet well said:

“When we asunder part;
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be join’d in heart,
And hope to meet again.”

I have one sister whom I have never seen in this world, and I long to see her in Heaven, and still another sister who slipped out of this old world and went to be with Jesus, and left on record the fact that she was going. I never expect to see her again in this world. I shall be delighted to see her on that ever-green shore.

I read a little story just recently which I believe will illustrate the unspeakable rapture of meeting our loved ones in Heaven.

A ship left France for the East Indies on a voyage that extended over a period

of several years. By-and-by, heavily laden, she started on her return trip. As the crew approached their native country, their joy was so great that they almost lost control of themselves. They climbed the rigging and peered into the distance, looking for the outlines of the familiar mountains and hills of their homeland. As they dimly loomed up in the distance, one cried, "Yonder it is." As they came nearer and nearer and the tops of the old hills and towers came in view, they could contain themselves no longer. When the vessel entered the harbor, and they saw their friends and relatives stretching forth their hands to embrace them, many of them leaped from the ship and literally swam to the shore and fell into the open arms of their dear ones who had looked and waited so long for their return.

Beloved, the old ship is now on a long voyage, seeking immortal gems with which to enrich the Master's imperishable crown. "Staunch are her timbers, brave

is her Captain, trusty her crew." She has made many trips and made them safely. She has landed millions, and they are waiting for us. The old ship will soon bear us over the storm-tossed sea to the native clime of our Father-land.

We cannot imagine the joy that will thrill our hearts when we shall run into the open arms of those who are watching, waiting, and longing for us at the end of life's tempestuous voyage. The anticipation of this happy meeting fills our eyes with tenderest tears and our hearts with holiest emotions.

(6) *The Last and Greatest Attraction will be Jesus.* He will be Heaven's morning star. He will be the great centre around which all of these other splendors and glories will revolve. Angels, arch-angels, seraphim and cherubim, as well as all the great, glorified company of saints and all other holy intelligences will come

falling at His feet, crowning him Lord of all.

I imagine that the redeemed will sing:

“All hail the pow’r of Jesus’ name!
Let angels prostrate fall.”

And the angels, hiding their blushing faces behind their silvery wings, will respond:

“Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown Him Lord of all.”

One veteran of the cross said that he wanted the first thousand years to look into the face of Jesus. As great as will be Heaven itself, its jewelled walls, its streets of gold, its eternal sun-kissed hills, its deathless atmosphere, the ravishing song of angels; as great as are these and as much to be longed after, they will not compare with the joy of catching one glimpse of Jesus. Indeed there would be no Heaven without Christ. Should we get there and view its unspeakable beauties, look upon its refulgent and burnished

throne, and view rank after rank of shining beings, if there were no Christ there, we would be sad, lonely, disappointed forever. Thank God, He will be there to give life, beauty, and glory to all of these other attractions! My eyes shall behold Him! I shall hear His voice! I shall look into His face!

“When my life’s work is ended, and I cross the
 swelling tide,
And the bright and glorious morning I shall see,
I shall know my Redeemer, when I reach the
 other side,
And His smile will be the first to welcome me.”

If there were nothing else in Heaven to add to its attractions, the very presence of our living, loving, and conquering Christ would be enough to tune our souls to the joy and music of endless years. I want to see the angels. I so much desire to see the old patriarchs and prophets who walked with God in the twilight of the world’s history. It will be a great joy to see those whom Christ raised from the

dead, those with whom Christ labored when here on earth, and the great army of martyrs who were true to their Lord unto death. I want to see my mother, who first taught me to lisp the name of Jesus, and my dear sister, who made me promise to meet her in Heaven, and my two noble brothers, who in the zenith of their manhood were cut down by the cruel hand of death and are now waiting just inside the peaceful portals, but, oh, above all, I want to see Jesus! Yes, Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary, the Son of God, the God-man, the Friend of sinners, and the Redeemer of the world, will be Heaven's central and climacteric glory.

“Face to face with Christ my Saviour,
Face to face what will it be,
When in rapture I behold Him,
Jesus Christ who died for me?

Only faintly now I see Him
With a darkening veil between,
But a blessed day is coming
When His glory shall be seen.

What rejoicing in His presence
When are banished grief and pain;
And the crooked ways are straightened
And the dark things are made plain.

Face to face with Christ my Saviour,
Face to face to see and know,
Face to face in all His glory,
Jesus Christ who loved me so.

Face to face shall I behold Him,
Far beyond the starry sky,
Face to face in all His glory,
I shall see Him by and by."

I read a story of a man, who, when dying, turned to a devoted, loving daughter, who was watching over her sick father with the vigilance of an angel. Said he, "Bring!" His strength failed him. Then the broken-hearted daughter with tears streaming down her face said, "Dear father, what shall I bring?"

"Bring!"—and his voice failed him again. The dear daughter, bending lovingly over the bed of the dying man, said: "Father, dear, precious father, tell your

child what you want. I will bring you anything that I can." The dying saint rallied all of his strength and whispered,

"Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown Him Lord of all."

This is not only the sweet sentiment of earth, but will be the universal sentiment of Heaven.

It is said that when King George the Third was crowned and invested with all his royal dignity, that all the peers were allowed the privilege of putting on their crowns, so that it gave the appearance that they were all kings. Soon every one came and laid his crown at his sovereign's feet, in testimony of his having no power or authority but that which he received from him. Then each of them kissed his sceptre and it is said that the king allowed each of them to kiss him, after which he picked up the crowns at his feet and replaced them upon the brows of his loving subordinates. So, in Heaven, we will take our gem-bestudded crowns and lay them

at His pierced feet and cry, "Unworthy, unworthy, but worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain," and our blessed Lord, lifting us, will replace the crowns of glory and eternal life on our immortal brows and grant us the wondrous privilege of being His loving subordinates forever.

So many times I have endeavored to draw some idea of some of the things that will attend that triumphal procession in the last day. My soul seems to have faintly grasped the vision, but oh, it has been so difficult to put the thoughts into poor, weak words. In undertaking this, one feels very much like a boy standing on tip-toe at the foot of a great mountain range, straining with all his might to see what is on the other side. Much that we may say as to what will take place in the celebration of this wondrous event is, after all, largely conjectural and speculative, but still, from what we read and feel, we can not help but draw some mental pictures. Contrasting the culmination of

this world's conflict and the dawn of Heaven's cloudless day with the things we see about us, we get a faint idea of some things that might take place.

Some of the great "Home Comings" of earth with their extravagant celebrations, stirring music, flying, fluttering banners, long lines of marching columns, thousands of eager, awe-inspired onlookers, with their heroes, and with one commanding person at the head, have at times set a whole nation wild with enthusiasm. There will be many noble heroes in Heaven, but Jesus Christ will be the chief. In that great heavenly procession, will not angels be in the line of march? Yes, as they are ministering servants, I imagine they will all turn out and lead the way. Next in order, it seems, would be the shining columns of Old Testament saints; following on, with a mighty shout, are the New Testament warriors; keeping step, and singing the sweet song of eternal deliverance, are the martyrs; then every saint

from the martyrs to the end of the world. Who knows but that these millions of starry worlds will be so many glittering galleries from which myriads of holy, happy, unfallen beings will view with unprecedented wonder and amazement the supernal glory of this spectacular event? They march on through the gates, and veil their happy faces as they begin to encircle the great white throne, the centre of the heavenly universe.

Suddenly the whole heavenly world seems to rock and quiver with living pæans of indescribable music. Every being and every instrument seems to be employed. The great organ of eternity is thundering its tremulous tones; every golden harp chord is vibrating with the most exquisite music; all the silvery bells from their golden domes are ringing out a merry peal; Heaven's immortal bands are rolling forth their loudest, sweetest strains; the immortal choirs shout the song of the Lamb. Everything in Heaven

is pouring forth unutterable music. It seems to ripple from Heaven's mirroring streams, dash, splash, and sparkle from its crystal fountains, lumber and roll from its eternal hills, and crash and burst in great, harmonious strains from every niche, and corner, and sweep in mighty volume to every part of Heaven's vast domain!

What meaneth this tremendous and tumultuous outburst of holy rapture? What meaneth these fluttering banners and shouting host? What meaneth the waving of these victorious palms? Why, the King! The King! The King eternal is riding through. With simultaneous accord, this surging, rapturous concourse gives way, and the attention of the entire universe is turned upon Him. Suddenly this mighty host begins to chant, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty,

the Lord mighty in battle; the Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory!"

Behold, He cometh! Every eye eager to see Him! Everyone eager to fall at His feet! He rides the white horse of universal triumph! Every sceptre is in His blessed hand! Every diadem bedecks His glittering brow! Everyone knows Him. In His hands and feet are nail prints. Of this vast, white robed throng, He is the only one whose vesture is dipped in blood. In rapid succession, he rides by rank after rank of shining beings, and finally reaches the throne of God, the Father, and delivers up the purchase of His blood, the spoils from this world gathered by years of bloody conquest. Taking these immortal trophies before this assembled and admiring universe, and weaving them into a crown amid the greatest outburst of shouts that Heaven has ever known, God, the Father, places it upon the brow of "Earth's Redeemer" and "Heaven's Hero."

“When Jesus is crowned the King of all Kings,
I want to be there, don’t you?
With shouting and singing till all Heaven rings,
I want to be there, don’t you?”

Here language fails. Here imagination folds its wings. Here thought reels, staggers, and falls by the way side. Here we would like to borrow the eloquence of a flaming seraph. Will this not be the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy? “He shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied.”

V. The Way to Heaven, or Heaven's Fitness

Let me call your attention in connection with this thought to Hebrews 12:14. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Rev. William Jones, M.D., D.D., LL. D., commenting on this scripture, said, "the simplest interpretation of this text emphasizes the fact that Heaven is a holy place, and that if we would enter or enjoy Heaven, we must, as a pre-requisite, obtain holiness. This plain, simple statement from the word of God forever shuts the gate of Heaven to every one that is not holy. It clearly teaches us that all of us are excluded who have not come into this grace."

Dr. Jones, commenting again, says, "the apostle affirms that no man, great or small, learned or ignorant, cultured or uncouth, sage or sensualist, king or peasant, priest or prophet, shall enter Heaven except that he shall first have been made holy."

Let us imagine that I am a truth seeker, I am weary and tired of this world, I have heard of this better Country, and I have an earnest desire to reach it and dwell forever inside its peaceful portals. I desire information regarding the fitness required to enter there. To whom shall I go? First I go to God, the infinite, eternal sovereign of the universe; I fall down before Him and pray, "O God, thou hast created me, thou dost know all things in Heaven and in earth. I desire this better country; I desire the moral fitness necessary to enjoy it. Show me the way." He speaks to me and says, "Be ye holy, for I am holy. I am holy in character and in purpose. If you would live in my presence forever, you must be holy."

I go to Jesus Christ, the eternal, ever-existent Son; I fall down before Him and say, "Oh Jesus, thou, the great Fountain-head of light, love, and truth; thou art a Friend and Saviour of sinners. I am sick of this world. I desire a better life and a

better Country. Teach me the way!" He speaks to me and says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

I turn to the Holy Spirit, the omnipotent, omnipresent, third Person of the Trinity, and beseech Him with longing heart, "Show me the truth. Thou blessed Comforter; thou gracious executive of the Godhead, tell me, oh tell me, what must I have to enter Heaven and dwell in that peaceful Land forever?" Back comes the answer, "Down through the ages, was it not prophesied of me that I should 'sit as a refiner of silver, and bestow upon all who met the requirements this glorious baptism of heart-cleansing power, purifying their hearts by faith?' Yea, verily."

I go to the inspired Word, the great Chart to direct men to Heaven. I peruse its sacred pages carefully, and lo, I discover from its Genesis to its Revelation it speaks to me about a holy God; about holy angels, about a holy Heaven, and about the blood of Christ that was shed to make

me holy and thus bring me in harmony with all other holy intelligences! I find in its sacred pages, holiness in the purpose and will of God, holiness promised, holiness abundantly provided for in the meritorious blood of Jesus; and, to my utter astonishment, I find that the great, eternal God has bound himself with an irrevocable oath that he would grant unto us (if we would meet certain conditions), this inestimable blessing that brings complete happiness here and prepares us for that better Country yonder.

Is it any wonder that Dr. Foster said, "It breathes in the prophecy, thunders in the law, murmurs in the narrative, whispers in the promises, supplicates in the prayers, resounds in the songs, sparkles in the poetry, shines in the types, glows in the imagery, and burns in the spirit, of the whole scheme, from its alpha to its omega,—its beginning to its end. Holiness! Holiness needed! Holiness required! Holiness offered! Holiness attainable!

Holiness a present duty, a present privilege, a present enjoyment, is the progress and completeness of its wondrous theme! It is the truth glowing all over and voicing all through revelation; singing and shouting in all its history and biography, and poetry, and prophecy, and precept, and promise, and prayer; the great central truth of the system. * * * * If God has spoken at all it is to aid men to be holy. The wonder is that all do not see, that any rise up to question, a truth so conspicuous, so glorious, so full of comfort."

Dr. Jones said that holiness is not obscurely hidden away in the more important truths of the Bible. It is conspicuous everywhere in the Word of God. From what we read in the Bible, one might as well think of going to Europe without a vessel as of going to Heaven without holiness. One might as well think of living without atmosphere as living in Heaven without being holy. But what do you mean by holiness? Holiness in thought,

holiness in word, holiness in acts, holiness in your public life, holiness in your private life, holiness in your secret life, holiness from the crown of a man's head to the soles of his feet, and to the tips of his middle fingers! Without it God says that no man, high or low, rich or poor, educated or illiterate, shall ever enter Heaven. Renown, beauty, comeliness, learning, eminence, finery, and glitter have great value on earth, but will not help one through Heaven's pearly gates. The distinguishing mark, the only thing that will give any one a passport through is, "HOLINESS OF HEART AND LIFE." If we would see the angels, we must be holy! If we would see the old patriarchs and prophets, we must be holy! If we would see the New Testament warriors, we must be holy! If we would be happily and forever reunited with our dear, loved ones we must be holy! If we would see the King in all of His marvellous, matchless beauty, we must be holy! Yea, verily,

across Heaven's gleaming, glittering portals, stretches the legend, "WITHOUT HOLINESS NO MAN CAN ENTER HERE!"

As one has truly said,

"There is no entrance to the City but by the gates, no passage to glory but by grace. The wall of this City is said to be great and high,—so high that there will be no climbing over, so great there will be no breaking through,—therefore through the gates, or no other way.

"'Corruption doth not inherit incorruption.' This corrupt man must be regenerated that he may be saved; must be sanctified that he may be glorified. Some trust to open these gates with golden keys, but bribery is rather a key that opens the gates of hell.

"Others have dreamed of no other gate but their own righteousness. Poor souls, they cannot find the gates because they stand in their own light. Others think to pass through on other men's merits; as

well may one bird hope to fly with another's wings. Only grace is the gate.

"Heaven is a glorious place and therefore reserved for gracious men. 'To the spirits of just men made perfect,'—there must be admitted none save they that are justified. If you will not pass through the gates of holiness in this life, you can not enter the City of happiness in the life to come. Pass through the gates of grace a holy and sanctified soul, and you shall not fail of the City of glory."

'Twill always be new,
'Twill never decay,
There no night ever comes
'Twill always be day.
It gladdens my heart
With a joy that's untold
To think of that land
Where we'll never grow old.

What Others Have Said About Heaven

First—Heaven a Place

“Heaven is a place of complete victory and glorious triumph. This is the battlefield: There is the triumphal procession. This is the land of the sword and the spear: that is the land of the wreath and the crown. This is the land of the garment rolled in blood and the dust of the fight; that is the land of the trumpet’s joyful sound; that is the place of the white robe, and of the shout of conquest. Oh, what a thrill of joy shall shoot through the hearts of all the blessed when their conquests shall be completed in heaven; when death itself, the last of the foes, shall be slain; when Satan shall be dragged captive at the chariot-wheels of Christ; when He shall have overthrown sin, and trampled corruption as the mire of the streets; when the great shout of universal victory shall rise from the hearts of all the redeemed.”

C. H. SPURGEON.

'Home'—oh, how sweet is that word! What beautiful and tender associations cluster thick around it! Compared with it, house, mansion, palace, are cold, heartless terms, But 'home!' that word quickens the pulse, warms the heart, stirs the soul to its depths, makes age feel young again, rouses apathy into energy, sustains the sailor in his midnight watch, inspires the soldier with courage on the field of battle, and imparts patient endurance to the worn down sons of toil. The thought of it has proved a sevenfold shield to virtue; the very name of it has been a spell to call back the wanderer from the paths of vice. And far away, where myrtles bloom and palm trees wave, and the ocean sleeps upon the coral strands, to the exile's fond fancy it clothes the naked rock, or stormy shore, or barren moor, or wild highland mountain, with charms he weeps to think of, and longs once more to see. Grace sanctifies these lovely affections, and imparts a sacredness

to the homes of earth by making them types of heaven. As a home the believer likes to think of it. Thus, when lately bending over a dying saint, and expressing our sorrow to see him lie so low, with the radiant countenance rather of one who has just left heaven than one about to enter it, he raised himself and clasped his hands, and exclaimed in ecstasy, 'I am going home'."

DR. GUTHRIE.

"A city never built with hands, nor hoary with the years of time—a city, whose inhabitants no census has numbered—a city, through whose streets rush no tides of business, nor nodding hearse creeps slowly with its burden to the tomb—a city, without griefs or graves, without sins or sorrows, without births or burials, without marriages or mournings—a city which glories in having Jesus for its king, angels for its guards, saints for its citizens; whose walls are salvation, and whose gates are praise."

DR. GUTHRIE.

“Very often people come to me and say: ‘Mr. Moody, do you think we shall know each other in Heaven?’ Often the question comes from a mother who has lost a dear child, and who wishes to see it again. Sometimes it comes from a child who has lost a mother, or a father, and who wants to recognize them in Heaven. A great many people are anxious to know where their loved ones are, and whether they shall know them when they see them again. There is just one verse in Scripture in answer to this question, and that is: ‘I shall be satisfied.’ It is all I want to know. If I do not know my mother in Heaven, do you think I shall be ‘satisfied?’ My brother who went up there I shall see, because I shall be satisfied. We shall see all those we loved on earth up there, and if we loved them here we shall love them ten thousand times more when we meet them there. Who gave me love for my mother? Who put that love into my heart? Then will He not satisfy that

love? I shall know her, and better than I did here. You will know that child of yours when you get there.

“I haven’t any doubt but that I shall know all these men whose acquaintance I have made in the Bible. We are clearly taught that God the Father is there, and that He is a person, that He has a location, that He lives in Heaven, and that we shall see Him and be with Him, because we find all through the Scriptures that Christ is with the Father, and They are one, and His prayer was that His disciples might be with Him. Surely we shall know each other there.”

D. L. MOODY.

“‘I’m coming, mamma.’ These were among the last words of a young girl seventeen years of age whose mother died when she was a babe. For three years she had been an earnest, devoted Christian. After three weeks of illness of typhoid

fever, it was evident that she was very near death. Her father was weeping in a room adjoining the one in which she was lying. She heard him and said, 'Tell him not to cry—tell them all not to shed a tear for me.' Then after speaking of the band of angels all around her she added: 'Yes, there's ma—I'm coming ma.' and then, 'O, Maggie,' and thus greeting the friends from the other shore, she went to be with them and with her Saviour.

"Her words, 'O, Maggie' were the more remarkable from the fact that Maggie was a cousin—also an earnest Christian—who had died only two days before, and of whose death the dying girl had not been informed."

Second — Shall We Know Each Other There?

"A little girl of the ethereal spirit, who lost her mother before she could remember, would say to her devoted friends, 'Now

tell me about my mamma?" She listened with delight to the oft-told story. Then her request would be to be taken where she could see her mother's portrait, upon which she would gaze for hours. As she was dying, her attentive friend whispered, 'Do you know me, darling?' but awoke no response. Just at the last, while gazing upward, she cried, with transport in her tone, 'Mother!' and passed to her mother's embrace."

"Little Mary was an attendant of an industrial school in New York City. In her last moments she sang, 'Come to Jesus,' when the angels carried her to heaven.

"Two years afterward the mother died. As death drew near she exclaimed, 'Don't you hear my child singing? She is singing the same sweet song, 'Come to Jesus,' that she learned at school'."

"If this be death, there is no valley. This is glorious. I have been within the gates and I saw the children, Dwight and Irene (his two grandchildren who had died). Earth is receding. Heaven is approaching. God is calling me."

D. L. MOODY.

Third —Glimpses of Heaven

Mr. John Holland, the day before he died, called for the Bible, saying, "Come, O come; death approaches, let us gather some flowers to comfort this hour." And turning with his own hand to the eighth chapter of Romans, he gave the book to Mr. Leigh, and bade him read: at the end of every verse he paused, and then gave the sense, to his own comfort, but more to the joy and wonder of his friends. He continued his meditations on the eighth of Romans, thus read to him, for two hours or more when suddenly he said, "O, stay your reading! What brightness is this I

see? Have you lighted up any candles?" Mr. Leigh answered, "No, it is the sunshine;" for it was about five o'clock in a clear summer evening. "Sunshine!" said he, "nay, it is my Saviour's shine. Now, farewell, World; welcome Heaven. The Day-star from on high hath visited my heart. O, speak it when I am gone, and preach it at my funeral! God dealeth familiarly with man. I feel His mercy; I see His majesty; whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth; but I see things that are unutterable." Thus ravished in spirit, he roamed toward Heaven with a cheerful look, and soft sweet voice; but what he said could not be understood.

Dr. Payson, one of the most eminent and consecrated ministers, who continually lived in the atmosphere of holiness, and was often heard crying, "O, to be holy as God is holy," when on his death bed, exclaimed, "I seem to be swimming in a flood of glory. The battle is fought and

the victory is won forever! I am going to bathe in an ocean of purity and happiness through all eternity. It seems as if the promise, 'God shall wipe all tears from their eyes,' was already fulfilled to me, as respects tears of sorrow. I have no tears to shed now, but those of love, joy, and thankfulness." This holy man when dying exclaimed, "Peace! Peace! Victory! Victory!"

The dying testimony of James Brainerd Taylor was:

"I am a happy, though a sick and dying man. The Lord most gently and mercifully hands me down the hill of life, while the descent seems very short. O, it will be sweet to take the last step, and walk into eternity. To me the grave wears a choice attire—Paradise more choice. O, think not that I am gloomy or depressed; far, far, very far from it. Think of me as visited from above, and rolling along in a chariot all paved with love."

"Eternity rolls up before me like a sea of glory, and so near, Oh! that blessed company of redeemed sinners, and the glorious Jesus! What a Saviour; and He is mine. Oh! what a speck of time is the longest life to prepare for that blessed world."

MOTHER MARGARET PRIOR.

"Welcome, thou cross of Christ!" After the fire was kindled, she said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour."

MRS. CICELY ORMES, *Martyr*.

"I shall soon be with Jesus. Perhaps I am too anxious. Can this be death? Why, it's better than living! Tell them I die happy in Jesus."

JOHN ARTHUR LYTH.

"I am on the border-land. All is well, all is well. Is this death? If this be death, then it is pleasant to die."

REV. DAVID S. MONTGOMERY.

"Oh, I see such a fullness in Christ, as I never saw before. Tell the people I am trusting in a full salvation."

REV. P. CORL.

"We shall meet ere long to sing the new song, and remain happy forever in a world without end."

JOHN BUNYAN.

"O! What a blaze and a shout there will be when old John gets to Heaven."

REV. JOHN WARBURTON.

"Oh! how beautiful. The opening Heavens around me shine."

REV. PHILIP HECK.

"I am sure of Heaven, and will not have to wait long till I get there."

REV. SOLOMON BIGHAM.

"Glory to God, I see the Heavens open before me."

BENJAMIN ABBOTT.

"Is this dying? Is this dying? No, it
is sweet living."

REV. ALFRED CROLL.

"Do you see that bright light? Do you
see those angels?"

REV. WILLIAM STEPHENSON.

"Rest, happiness, and peace forever."

BISHOP PIERCE.

"How bright the room; how full of
angels!"

MISS MARTHA MCCrackIN.

"I shall receive the crown of glory."

REV. THOMAS H. STOCKTON.

"They sing! The angels sing!"

REV. FRANCIS BRAZEE.

"I see Jesus."

JACOB EIGHENINGER.

Fourth — Promiscuous

“The glory of Heaven is such that it never can be fully known, till it be fully enjoyed. And yet if Heaven were ever made crystally transparent to you, if ever God opened you a window into it, and then opened the eye of your faith to look in by that window, think what it was that you there discovered, what inaccessible light, what cherishing love, what daunting majesty, what infinite purity, what overloading joy, what insupportable and sinking glory, what rays and sparklings from crowns and sceptres! but more from the smiles and glances of God upon the heavenly host, who forever warm and sun themselves in His presence; and when you have thought all this then think once again that all your thoughts are but shadows and glimmerings, that there are dust and ashes in the eye of your faith that make all these discoveries come infinitely short of the native glory of these things; and then you may guess, and somewhat near, what Heaven is.”

BISHOP HOPKINS.

The Last Words of a Dying Soldier.

“Bear the news to dear old Mother. Take her my wages and the Bible she gave me as I said good-bye at the road gate in front of the apple orchard—Tell her I am come to firmly believe in the teachings of her Book as she taught it to me in childhood; and therefore I will see her in that Heaven of which it speaks, where the throb of the war-drum, the burst of the shell, the clash of steel, and the groans of dying brothers are heard no more.”

“From His throne in Glory, while the angelic host looks on in admiration, our Lord points down to His tried, and tested, and toil-worn pilgrims on earth, and says: ‘These are mine. They are my peculiar people. They have kept my commandments, and shall have right to the tree of life. They have trodden the way of the Cross, and despised the shame, and gone hungry, and destitute, and been persecuted for righteousness’ sake but I have prepared for them a City’.”

“And looking back upon ‘the sea that brought us thither,’ we shall behold its waters flashing in the light of that everlasting morning and hear them breaking into music upon the eternal shore. And then, brethren, when all the weary night-watchers on the stormy ocean of life are gathered together around Him who watched with them from His throne on the bordering mountains of eternity, where the day shines forever—then He will seat them at His table in His kingdom, and none will need to ask, ‘Who art Thou?’ or ‘Where am I?’ ‘for all shall know it is the Lord,’ and the full, perfect, unchangeable vision of His blessed face will be Heaven.”

ALEXANDER MACLAREN.

“Will not this be the description of our future being—‘reaching forth unto those things which are before’? I believe that we shall thus live through all the eternities that are before us, growing wiser, nobler,

stronger, greater; plunging deeper into God, and being more and more filled with more and more of Him. So we shall move forever as in ascending spirals that rise ever higher, and draw ever closer to the throne we compass and to Him that dwells alone; ever perfect, yet ever growing, for we have an inexhaustible Saviour to absorb into our hearts, and we have hearts that never reach the ultimate bound and term of their infinite possibility of receiving."

ALEXANDER MACLAREN.

"No human tongue has ever been able adequately to describe the glories of the finally redeemed soul. The pen of the most seraphic writer falls at his side at the thought of such an attempt. Down here the cries of the wounded, and bruised, and maimed, the sick and the deformed, resound on every hand, till we exclaim in anguish, 'How long, Oh Lord, how long?' Over there, comes back through

the shining mists the answer, 'nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.' "

L. D. PEAVEY.

"Mamma," said a little child, "my Sunday-school teacher tells me that this world is only a place where God lets us live awhile, that we may prepare for a better world. But, mamma, I do not see anybody preparing. I see you preparing to go to the country, and Aunt Eliza is preparing to come here; but I do not see any one preparing to go there; why don't they try to get ready?"

"If one could but look awhile through the chinks of Heaven's door, and see the beauty and bliss of Paradise; if he could but lay his ear to Heaven, and hear the ravishing music of those seraphic spirits, and the anthems of praise which they sing; how would his soul be exhilarated and transported with joy!"

WATSON.

Mr. Mead, an aged Christian, when asked how he did, answered, "I am going home as fast as I can, as every honest man ought to do when his day's work is over; and I bless God I have a good home to go to."

"When the first sight of those shining walls shall break on the glorified vision,—nay, even now, by the eye of faith, there comes such a torrent of rapture sweeping down through the soul, as makes the last, lingering thought of trial take to itself wings and vanish away!"

L. D. PEAVEY.

Jerusalem, the golden!
With milk and honey blest,
Beneath thy contemplation
Sink heart and voice oppressed.
I know not, oh I know not,
What social joys are there!
What radiancy of glory!
What light beyond compare!

They stand, those halls of Zion,
All jubilant with song,
And bright with many an angel,
And all the martyr throng.
The Prince is ever in them,
The daylight is serene;
The pastures of the blessed
Are decked in glorious sheen.

There is the throne of David;
And there, from care released,
The shout of them that triumph,
The song of them that feast:
And they who, with their Leader,
Have conquered in the fight
For ever and for ever
Are clad in robes of white.

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